



Henry County, Virginia

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Henry County Monthly Newsletter

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Local CSA Coordinator recognized by national group

Bud Sedwick, the Comprehensive Services Act coordinator for Henry County, Patrick County and the City of Martinsville, received a Community Service Award from the National Counseling Group at its annual meeting May 1 in Richmond.

Sedwick, who has been the local CSA coordinator since 1992, was recognized for his work for the three localities. He was one of just two honorees this year and received his award from the Honorable Tim Kaine, Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Deborah Sikes, Vice President for National Counseling Group, praised Sedwick for his commitment to his community.

"Your work, Mr. Sedwick, as the Comprehensive Services Act coordinator for Henry County, Patrick County, and the City of Martinsville ... demonstrates your life-long commitment to the well-being of all those you touch," Sikes said.

The Comprehensive Services Act began with a study by the Virginia General Assembly in the late 1980s. The Act was created to provide high quality, child-centered, family-focused, cost-effective, and community-based services for high-risk youth and their families.

The Act called for the pooling of eight specific funding streams used to purchase services for high-risk youth. These funds are returned to the localities with a required state/ local match and are managed by local interagency teams called Community Policy and Management Teams.

Henry County's CPMT is staffed by representatives from Henry County, the Henry-Martinsville Department of Social Services, Henry County Schools, Piedmont Community Services, the Juvenile Court Services Unit, the Henry-Martinsville Health Department, a parent representative, and a private service provider. Patrick County and the City of Martinsville have their own CPMT groups, and Sedwick provides professional support to each of these three teams.

The CPMT has administrative and fiscal responsibility for the local funds pool, for developing local policies and procedures.

"Bud Sedwick does a tremendous job for Henry County in managing the fiscal duties of CSA and providing the best service possible for at-risk youth in our community," said Henry County Administrator Benny Summerlin. "He deserves this recognition, and we are lucky to have him with us."

Gravelly Nature Preserve opens

Henry County, in conjunction with the Dan River Basin Association and its affiliate, the Martinsville-Henry County Rivers and Trails Group held a dedication ceremony April 26 for the Richard P. Gravelly Jr. Nature Preserve.

The preserve, located on Eggleston Falls Road in Ridgeway, is a 75-acre tract bordering the Smith River. The land was once home to a 500-acre plantation in the 1800s and a thriving tobacco farm in the 1900s. The preserve is the County's seventh park and 19th recreation facility. It features 1.5 miles of marked wooded hiking trails with more to come, an informational sign with a history and map of the facility, stations on the trail that identify the plants nearby, and a station identifying the Burgess family cemetery. It also has a gravel parking lot and a picnic shelter.

Gravely was an industrialist, civic leader, historian, and archeologist. He was president of Gravely Furniture Co., started by his father, R.P. Gravely Sr., and organized and was chairman of Henry County Plywood Co. He helped organize a local archeological society and was instrumental in getting a grant to excavate a major Indian village in the Koehler section of Henry County and an Indian village at the site of the Blue Ridge Regional Airport in Spencer. Among many other interests and honors, he was named Virginia's Archeologist of the Year in 1984.

After Gravely's death, the property became held by the Virginia Museum of Natural History, which sold it to Henry County. The County partnered with the Dan River Basin Association to create the preserve.

Jennifer Doss, Rivers & Trails Project Manager for the DRBA, presented awards to several entities, including Sam Adkins Home Building, the Public Service Authority, Parks & Recreation, Martinsville Henry County Rivers & Trails, The Harvest Foundation, and others.

Sports Complex holds groundbreaking ceremony

The April 12 groundbreaking ceremony for the Smith River Sports Complex was not your typical groundbreaking. Instead of the traditional shovel of dirt, approximately 75 guests watched as area youth soccer players and one adult player kicked soccer balls into two portable goals to officially 'kick off' the construction.

The \$8.7 million complex is one of two Harvest Foundation-funded projects and is expected to be finished in June 2009. It will have two championship soccer fields, each with artificial turf, lights, an electronic scoreboard and fixed bleachers for about 250 spectators. It also will have three other full-sized soccer fields with lights, a practice field, a playground, two picnic shelters, walking and nature trails, canoe access on the Smith River nearby, concrete sidewalks and a pavilion with a concession stand, restrooms and office and meeting space.

The complex is envisioned as a community resource as well as a tourist attraction, said Bob Davis, President of The Harvest Foundation's Board of Directors. Local youth soccer players will be able to use the complex, but the facility is expected to lure people from other areas, including athletes, their families and sports fans. They will boost the local economy by staying in local motels, shopping in local stores and eating in local restaurants, officials have said.

While the complex is geared toward soccer, its fields will be able to be easily converted for sports such as football, field hockey and lacrosse, as well as for activities such as cheerleading and band competitions, plans indicate.

"This truly will be a first-class facility ... the first of its kind in the area," Davis said.

The Southern Virginia Recreation Facilities Authority will manage the complex once construction is completed.

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